SECOND EDITION.

A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

A NOBLE LORD,

BY WAY OF

REPLY

TO THAT OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

BY

Bolingbroke.

" Nec ſum animi dubius verbis ea vincere magnum,
" Quam ſit, et anguſtis hunc addere rebus honorem."

DUBLIN:

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1796.

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A

LETTER.

MY LORD,

AS Mr. BURKE'S LETTER has of late occupied a conſiderable portion of public curioſity; and as I have reaſon to think it has met with your Lordſhip's critical peruſal, it will not, I truſt, be conſidered as an impertinent intruſion, if I trouble your attention with a few comments upon it.—As I know you entertain a degree of eſteem for this extraordinary character, I had ſome heſitation, at firſt, in calling your particular notice to this no leſs extraordinary publication; but when I conſidered that the errors of a great man, tho' they might be canvaſſed by common and ordinary minds, ſhould only be ſubmitted to the judgment and deciſion of his *equals* in *ſcience and knowledge*, and as Mr. Burke himſelf has "claimed the ſpirit of the Engliſh law—to be tried by *his peers*," I ſaw no man in this country, who could more properly be called to ſit upon his jury, than your Lordſhip.

To you, my Lord, on whom nature has beſtowed the rare excellence, of viewing calmly and undiſturbed, the tempeſt of the paſſions, ſecure in your own integrity, and embued with that fine taſte which obſervation, travel, and the beſt authors have aſſiſted to raiſe and purify, ſhould moſt properly be conſigned the works of the firſt artiſts, among which Mr. Burke's pamphlet may, with propriety, be ranked.

Vague, contradictory, and devoid of argument as it is, it ſtill bears about it the ſtyle and colouring of a great maſter, but we nevertheleſs ſeem to view in it an inverted order; for, tho' dazzled with its brilliancy, we are perplexed with its variety, and the ſuperabundance of looſe and heavy ornaments with which he has thought proper to load it—a mob of metaphors which meet and joſtle one another in every page of it; ſo that the author, who has thus confounded them together, appears to have loſt all judgment and ſound diſcretion, at a time of life when other men begin to enjoy thoſe bleſſings the moſt, and to gain fire and imagination in proportion as he advances in years; like thoſe volcanoes, whoſe lofty ſummits are covered with the froſts of age, but whoſe entrails are conſumed by hidden conflagrations,—thoſe impotent irruptions of the mind, which, tho' they aſtoniſh us with their glare, and aſtound us with their noiſe, neither ſerve to illumine the dark mazes of miniſterial management, nor to purify the foul and peſtilential regions of corruption and venality.

Tho' this ſingular Letter did not fall into my hands, till it had ran thro' ſeveral editions in London, and had been publiſhed a week here;—

tho'

tho' numbers, no doubt, of the pigmy race are ſharpening, or have already ſharpened, their literary ſtings, for the fell onſet with this Man of Gath ;—tho' the name and authority of Edmund Burke ſtand high in the annals of politics and the world of letters ;—tho' he has attained a celebrity that rarely ſhines but on the tomb of a great man, and that the labours of his youth have been amply rewarded in his latter days, by the liberality of "a mild and benevolent Sovereign." Yet am I not awed by the impoſing ſanctity of his reputation, nor intimidated by that impetuous and overbearing eloquence, which has reſounded throughout all Europe and "animated it to eternal battle," from entering the liſts with this redoubted champion of the eighteenth century, and oppoſing my feeble ſhield againſt the furious career of this valorous cruſader; who, in no bigotted age, but living in the midſt of a liberal and enlightened people, by the force of a vivid and ſublime imagination, aided by an uncommon degree of enthuſiaſm, has ſucceeded in conjuring up the demon of diſcord, and kindling the flames of the moſt bloody and deſtructive war that has ever deſolated the earth or embroiled nations.—This indeed was to provide for both preſent and poſthumous celebrity: for as long as the remembrance of this war, now explicitly avowed by him to be "the moſt clearly *juſt* and *neceſſary* that this or any nation ever carried on," ſhall remain amongſt men, or the woes and wounds it has inflicted on the miſerable inhabitants of thoſe countries, which have felt the ſcourge of its devouring vengeance, ſhall continue to be deplored by their poſterity; he will be conſidered, while living, as the author and prime

mover

mover of it, and future generations will point to his tomb, and say, "*Here lies the man who slew thousands.*"

That this man should again resume his pen, after the many evils it has already called down upon the empire, and the catastrophe which must inevitably follow the publication of those his eccentric notions, or what may be called with more propriety, the dreams of his distemperature, I can only consider as arising from a sensibility, weakened and paralyzed by inveterate prejudices, or resulting from the infirmity of a mind, roused and irritated to frenzy by contradiction and controul, which, in the anguish of its exacerbations, forced him to turn aside from contemplating the great work of general carnage, and universal devastation, on which his thoughts had so long been fixed, and towards which all his plans and publications had a tendency, to fasten, as it were, with rancorous and invenomed tooth upon those, who dared to question or condemn the lavish bounty of the Crown, in rewarding *such a man* in *such a manner*.

Was it not enough, that after having sounded the first alarm, and (taking advantage of the national sympathy, awakened and excited by the crimes and cruelties then acting in France) roused Great-Britain to a bloody contest, in which one hundred millions of her treasure have been expended*, to avenge the crime of regicide, and

* According to Mr. Morgan's calculations, the present contest has cost Great-Britain, since 1793, £.101,504,044 ! ! !—*Vide*, "Facts addressed to the serious attention of the people of Great-Britain."

so

ſo many thouſand lives devoted to appeaſe the manes of ariſtocracy? Was it not enough to have cried "havoc, and let ſlip the dogs of war," which for three long years, have continued to tear in pieces and devaſtate the faireſt provinces of the earth, and to drown Europe with carnage and with tears?—Was it not enough, to have been pointed out as the unhappy and regretful promoter of this ruthleſs butchery of the human race, —as the retiring ſource from whence aroſe thoſe torrents of blood, that have been drawn from the "*municipal* *" country in which he was born, and his dearer country by adoption; and by ſilence and retreat to have evinced ſome compunction for the outrage he had committed againſt nature and humanity?—No! he muſt come forward in the gaudy and glittering trappings of a tinſel ſtyle, arrayed in all the pageantry of poetry, raiſed upon ſtilts inſtead of crutches, wielding a ſword inſtead of a crozier, and crowned with laurel inſtead of cypreſs—to brave the ſorrows of the nation, and tell the world with confidence and boaſting, that he was the AUTHOR OF THE WAR,

"*Nay an thou'lt mouth, I'll rant as well as thou.*

—"Had he a mind to keep that *high diſtinction* to himſelf, as from pride he might, but from juſtice he dare not!!!" I mean not to garble Mr. Burke's expreſſions, nor miſconſtrue his meaning; for, in the next and concluding paragraph of his work, he puts all ambiguity out of queſtion.——He ſays: "It would be a moſt arrogant preſumption in "me, to aſſume to myſelf the *glory* of what

* A vile expreſſion.

"belongs

" belongs to his Majeſty, and to his Miniſters, and " to his Parliament, and to the far greater ma- " jority of his faithful people: But had I ſtood " *alone* to counſel, and that all were determined " to be guided by my advice, and to follow it " implicitly——then I would have been *the ſole* " *Author of the War.*"

Mr. Burke has certainly choſen ſplendid acceſſories, and it is but fair he ſhould ſhare in the plunder, whether it be paid on account of his avowed or *ſecret* ſervices. The thrifty œconomy of the Miniſter might well afford, from the *ſavings* of the civil liſt, a more than ordinary compenſation to ſo truſty a partiſan, or reward ſuch *baſhful* merit from the ſurplus of the ſinking fund, without adding to the £. 150,000 * annually expended under the head of that extraordinary item, or recurring to the " ſpontaneous bounty of the Crown," for a penſion ſo inadequate to his deſerts!!!

I muſt confeſs, my Lord, that I have wandered a little from the original plan I intended to purſue; and have ſeized our author by the *wrong* end, if he will permit me to transfer that epithet from the head to the extremities of a work, which like its author, inverts every regular proportion in ſtyle and argument, and which, to be rightly underſtood, muſt be ſedulouſly followed thro' the devious and intricate mazes, thro' which his erratic fancy loves to ſtray.

Perhaps I ſhall be conſidered as one of thoſe perſons, whom he calls " the zealots of the new ſect of philoſophy and politics,"—and which having deſignated, he has left to others to explain.

* The amount of money ſtated to have been expended in 1795, under the head of *ſecret ſervice money*. Vide Morgan.

Under

Under the banners of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, I profeſs not to place myſelf, let them ſpeak and act for themſelves; nor is "perſonal abuſe" the object of this letter—I am only acquainted with Mr. Burke from his political life and writings; "tho' the part I now take is from zeal to the *Cauſe*."——The *Cauſe* for which (tho' he has thought proper to forget that eminent perſonage, in his genealogy of the houſe of Bedford) Ruſſel bled in the field, and Sydney on the ſcaffold—The *Cauſe* by which he has gained all his celebrity, and to which he has turned traitor and apoſtate—The *Cauſe* which ſaved Great-Britain from deſpotiſm, and gave her the bleſſings of a Free Conſtitution.—In that *Cauſe*, I truſt, I ſhall ever feel a laudable zeal, nor ſhall I be deterred from exerting my faint efforts in ſupport of it, by being denounced as one of the faction of the Prieſtleys and the Paines, of whoſe tenets and principles Mr. Burke feels ſuch an horror.

Should any thing I now write, "be the means of bringing out," as he is pleaſed to call it, "ſome more *handſome things*," from the "*goodneſs and condeſcenſion* of Lord Grenville," *I* ſhall feel in common with him a very "vivid ſatisfaction."

And does Edmund Burke, indeed, ſtand in need of Grenville's praiſe, and does he eſtimate it as *ſuch an honor?* Alas! how fallen, how changed!—To court invective as the means of "bringing out Lord Grenville's panegyric!" How are the mighty fallen!

"*Nec reparare novas vires multum priori*
"*Credere fortunæ. Stat magni nominis umbra.*"

It

It is this gentle violence, which has heaped upon him ſo many compliments and enviable "*diſtinctions*," at which he coquettiſhly repines. Theſe noble perſons "would not let him remain in obſcurity and inaction;" but, by their invectives, have called down upon him an applauſe, that muſt reſound thro' the univerſe!"

Why *did* he not remain in obſcurity and inaction?—No! he could not—he was haunted by revolutionary phantoms—the "hyenas" of France were let looſe upon him—the "national menagerie," was preſented to his diſturbed imagination—thoſe bloody revolutioniſts had "vexed the ſepulchre, and, by their ſorceries, called up the prophetic dead," and the ſolemn deprecation which they uttered as they vaniſhed, ſtill rung in his ears, and prevented his repoſe——

"*Ceaſe, ceaſe—perturbed ſpirit!*"

In this his "wretched condition, tho' hardly to be claſſed with the living," we cannot but recognize that unhappy malady, which afflicted the latter days of J. J. Rouſſeau, and muſt lament the ſufferings of the miſerable, hypochondriack, who conjures up phantoms to add to his deſpair, and feels himſelf aſſailed by imaginary evils; and was not the venom of rancour mingled with his ſpleen, we could pity rather than condemn him, and in a ſportive mood, compoſe a ditty rather than meditate a retort, and intitle it "*The Lamentations of poor Edmund.*"

No! He could not remain in obſcurity and inaction—for ſo great is his antipathy to Republics and Revolutionary Governments, that he would willingly part with his ſkin, could he thereby "animate all Europe to *eternal* battle."

"*Nunc*

" *Nunc quoque ne laſſum teneat privata ſenectus,*
" *Bella nefanda parat ſuetus civilibus armis.*"

Behold the recluſe and retired, the melancholy and mortified hermit, of Beaconsfield, reſume again his glittering arms, convert his ploughſhare to a ſword, change his cowl for an helmet, and like Peter of Amiens*, ruſh, incontinently, to battle.

I cannot divine what Mr. Burke means by his " *mortuary penſion*;" I know that in the Saxon reigns, by the council of Ænham, the " *ſymbolum animæ*," or ſoul-ſhot, was payable as an oblation, upon the death of a man; but how he can call a penſion granted to an " invalid ſervant of the public, to aſſuage the ſorrows of a " deſolate old man," an alms to the church, or a paſſport to eternity, ſurpaſſes my reading and my comprehenſion. *Perhaps* he meant that he might not long enjoy it, and took it, as ſome dying men do a wife, to ſhew how much he valued the hand that beſtowed it.

Were I to attempt a regular analyſis of the work before me, I ſhould ſtumble at every ſtep and entangle myſelf at every parentheſis. The author flies off from his ſubject the moment he touches it, and we are forced, by the aid of a mathematical diagram, to calculate the true angle of incidence, before we can conjecture where his

* " Peter the hermit, Mr. Burke's great prototype," (ſays Mr. Gibbon) " poſſeſſed that vehemence of ſpeech, which ſeldom fails to impart the perſuaſion of the ſoul; " *ex ſponte fluens ei non deerat eloquium.*" Like him too, " in his auſtere ſolitude, his body was emaciated, his fancy was inflamed;—whatever he wiſhed he believed, whatever he believed he *ſaw* in dreams and revelations," &c.—What a ſtriking ſimilitude!

bolt will fall. I am therefore conſtrained, of neceſſity, to follow this political Proteus, who changes his principles as often as he changes his night-cap, thro' all his metamorphoſes.—

" *Omnia transformat ſeſe in miracula rerum.*"

That "looſe libels ſhould be paſſed by in ſilence and contempt," I am free to acknowledge; but has Mr. Burke's practice in this, ſquared with his principles, and does he not rather ſeem to confute every poſition he lays down, in the concluſion he draws from it? "As long as he remained in public, he ſhould live down the calumnies of malice and the judgments of ignorance," when uttered by obſcure men, no doubt; for, he waves his forbearance, when "they derive an importance from the rank of the perſons they come from;" as if rank could entitle calumny to confutation, or ignorance derive conſequence from nobility of birth, or an exalted ſtation. This appears as if he ſometimes forgot his political breviary. But let us return to his PENSION.—"If I am unworthy, ſays he, the Miniſter is more than prodigal;" and here, for the firſt time, he puts a queſtion fairly at iſſue, "throws himſelf upon his country," which country is to try "the value of his ſervices," and challenges an "inqueſt of his *quantum meruit.*" This he has done with all due "decorum;" and, tho' I am bound to proſecute, I wiſh not the "culprit to plead in irons."

And here, without entering into a tedious diſquiſition on the merits of him, or the value of his ſervices, which can only be eſtimated by a comparative ſtatement of the good he has done, and the evils he has occaſioned, and by ſtriking a fair balance between his merits and demerits, let me admit that he "has done the ſtate ſome ſervice, and that they know it."

But

But, in oppoſition to that, let me place the flagrant aggreſſion on his part, avowed ſo vauntingly, of having been, if not in act, at leaſt in intention, the author of a war unexampled for expence and carnage; and this muſt be taken *pro confeſſo*. But muſt his merits and his ſervices be weighed in the falſe balance, in which he would place them, and according to the weights and meaſures by which he thinks proper to eſtimate their value? If ſo, to uſe his own language, and ſurely no language I could uſe could be ſo forcible. " Whatever his exertions have been, they were ſuch as no *hopes* of pecuniary reward could poſſibly excite; and no pecuniary compenſation can poſſibly reward them." They are "quantities incommenſurable!"—Yet, with all his boaſted independence, he could accept a penſion; but, like the Jew on his ſabbath, he would not aſk for it.

The object of his Reform Bill went, not to annihilate, but to modify the Penſion Liſt: ——He conſidered it as a ſacred fund for the incitement and reward of merit.—He " look-
" ed on the conſideration of public ſervice, or
" public ornament, to be real and very juſtice;
" and he ever held a ſcanty and penurious juſ-
" tice, to partake of the nature of wrong:" and he declares, " that a cold penury muſt blaſt the abilities of a nation, and ſtint the growth of its active energies."——I admit this to be juſt and true, but what does all this prove? Why, truly, that all his exertions were ſolely directed for the public good, and that he never ſought any pecuniary compenſation.——Tho' there was "but
" one voice, that no man in the kingdom better
" deſerved an honorable proviſion ſhould be
" made for him."——Tho' " he had earned it

" before

" before he had ſet his foot in St. Stephen's cha-
" pel,"——by exertions and labours, as miſcel-laneous and extraordinary, as the qualifications for a poet, detailed in Raſſelas; for, in the very " firſt ſeſſion he ſat in parliament," what had he not atchieved?——He had " analyzed the whole commercial, financial, conſtitutional, and foreign intereſts of Great Britain and its empire!"—— Tho' his conſtitution ſunk under the labour, and he had nearly fallen a martyr for the good of his country, yet this modern Hercules, who had cleanſed the Augean ſtable, ſought neither for place, profit, nor penſion!——Diſintereſted man! who nobly could deſpiſe the rewards of well-earned ſervices, and content yourſelf in making a laudable proviſion for others!

Let us now come to the ſecond head of the propoſition, and enquire " whether the Miniſter has been more than prodigal;"——for tho' Mr. Burke has put this with an *if*, hypothetically and as a conſequence to be deduced from his demerits, I muſt in admitting the converſe, namely, his deſerts, conſider miniſterial providence in the abſtract. In the memorable year of 1780, when Mr. Burke introduced his plan of œconomical reform, we were accumulating, according to his own ſtatement, a debt of about £.14,000,000 * per annum, which he then conſidered exceſſive, and for the reduction of which, he thought a ſyſtem of the utmoſt frugality abſolutely neceſſary, particularly in the reduction of the civil and penſion liſts. For the laſt three years we have been accumulating a debt of upwards of £.100,000,000 annually, and the debt of the na-

* *Vide* his ſpeech on œconomical reform.

tion

tion has advanced to the enormous amount of £.360,000,000 and upwards, the annual expence of which amounts to above £. 13,000,000 ! *. His plan alſo went to prevent the abuſe of, what he terms " *ſurplus caſh* under diſcretionary application," namely, under the head of *ſecret ſervice* and *ſpecial ſervice* money: that fund could not amount to more, at the time we are ſpeaking of, than about eighty thouſand pounds per annum, which in the laſt year has ſwelled to the bulk of one hundred and fifty-one thouſand pounds ſterling. Yet under all theſe circumſtances, while the civil liſt was encumbered with debts, and the public groaning under the preſſure of accumulating difficulties—while the nation was called on to diſcharge thoſe of the heir apparent, and the treaſury was nearly exhauſted, the *providence* of the Miniſter grants, and the *moderation* of the reformer accepts a penſion !—a penſion which he would wiſh the public to conſider him as contemning—a penſion totally inadequate to his deſerts, and from the contemplation of which he had ſo often turned indignant ! " When a diſpoſition to " expence was complained of, to that he op- " poſed not mere retrenchment, but a ſyſtem of " œconomy, which would make a random ex- " pence without plan or foreſight, in future, not " eaſily practicable." Yet this *diſintereſted* financier, this *provident* patriot, accepts an enormous annual benevolence, as a reward for paſt ſervices, or for uſeful retrenchments, at the very moment when Great-Britain is labouring under an increaſed expence and an indefinite expenditure, brought upon her by this man's vague and verſatile projects; and when the finances of the

* *Vide* Morgan.

country

country never ſtood in need of ſo much providence in grants and retrenchment in bounties!!

Is this or is it not "a departure from his ideas, "and the ſpirit of his conduct with regard to "œconomy?"—Yet he gravely tells us, "there is nothing in his conduct that can contradict, either the letter or ſpirit of his acts!"——He condemns with acrimony the French, whoſe women diſrobed themſelves of their beſt and moſt coſtly ornaments, to offer them up on the altar of the conſtitution for the ſalvation of their country.—Yet this pious Agricola exacts a ſuperfluous boon, from the neceſſities of the ſtate, for his paſt ſervices, and levies a fine upon public induſtry and public calamity, at the moment in which the nation is on the brink of bankruptcy, and perhaps about to ſurrender her all to the importunity of her creditors—with a *debt of three hundred and ſixty millions*, and a war ſtill raging, which muſt add many more millions to the account of her loſſes!!

Mr. Burke defines a penſion to be "an honorable proviſion," ariſing from "the ſpontaneous bounty of the Crown." What ſaid his friend Dr. Johnſon, before he became a penſioner? That in "England, it was generally underſtood to mean, pay given to a ſtate *hireling* for treaſon to his country;" and a penſioner to be "a ſlave of ſtate, hired by a ſtipend to obey his maſter."—Surely if Mr. Burke had recently peruſed the Dictionary of the Engliſh language, he would have revolted at the idea of being dubbed a *ſlave* and an hireling, nor condeſcended to receive a ſtipend from that beneficent maſter, whom he had pronounced to have been "hurled by God from his throne," in the effuſions of his loyalty; or accepted an hire from a Miniſter, who had been

in

in the habit of ridiculing and reviling him—but

" *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur ~~cum~~ illis.*"

And that is the motto I would beſtow on our penſioner.

From what I have already ſaid, I think it pretty manifeſt, that Mr. Burke has " departed in ſome meaſure," from his former ideas, and the " ſpirit of his conduct," in the year 1782, " in regard to œconomy." But perhaps he has ſince diſcovered, by the aid of ſome new light in philoſophy, that the notions of œconomy which he then entertained " were falſe and ill-grounded," for ſo he expreſſes himſelf, notwithſtanding the " incredible pains" which they " coſt him," and as a compenſation for which, he eſtimates a penſion amounting, as I am well informed, to £.3500 per annum, inadequate. I envy as little as he can the bounties of the Crown, when conferred upon merit, nor would I wiſh to " ſtand between " any man and his reward of ſervice, or his encouragement in uſeful talent and purſuit." I before waved every inquiry into his peculiar deſerts and extraordinary merits, and I repeat again, as I before expreſſed myſelf, that, by accepting an overgrown and enormous penſion, at ſuch a time, and under ſuch diſqualifications, as his own ſolemn acts and former declarations laid him under, he has radically departed from his " *ideas and the ſpirit of his conduct with regard to œconomy.*

But enough I think has been ſaid on this noiſome and invidious ſubject, let me therefore quit, with him, for the preſent, " thoſe trifling, vexatious, and oppreſſive details," by which he has " falſely and ridiculouſly" endeavoured to palliate the moſt obvious deviation from conſiſtency that folly ever blundered on, and which, in

my

my mind, ſtill forms the " very head and front of his offending."

Stung, as by a gad fly, in the heat of his encounter with the Duke of Bedford, tho' ſupported by the joint ſervices, and kept in countenance by the united penſions of Mr. Dunning and Mr. Barrè, or as he himſelf more poetically expreſſes it, (for I love to quote Mr. Burke againſt Edmund Burke) " as if ſome portentous comet had croſſed upon him, and hurried him out of the highway"——of his argument, he ſuddenly flies off into the " Rights of Man,"—details all the " vices, crimes, horrors and miſeries of the French revolution," from whence, by a happy tranſition, he paſſes to the loſs of our colonies, and the dangers that beſet the Britiſh conſtitution, from which he prophetically and poetically concludes, " that had they taken place, not France, " but England, would have had the honor of " leading up the death dance of Democratic " Revolution."——

" *Grandevus Nereus : novit namque omnia vates,*
" *Quæ ſint—quæ fuerint—quæ mox ventura trahantur.*"

Full fraught with this prophetic fury, he croſſes the Atlantic, flies over the Britiſh Channel, and arrives in Ireland, where he finds things " run in a ſtill more eccentric courſe,"—but he ſtops not a moment there; and upon caſting our eyes a few lines lower down, lo! we diſcover him wailing over the tomb of Lord North, and lamenting, like the Prince of Denmark, the " admirable parts—general knowledge—verſatile underſtanding—infinite wit—delightful temper——and *diſintereſted* mind," of poor Yorick.——

" Alas! alas! that genius knows not how to ſtoop to method."——

At

At this time, my Lord, Mr. Burke ſtates himſelf to have been "connected with men of high place in the community, who "loved *Liberty* as well as the Duke of Bedford, and underſtood it as well." To "preſerve the conſtitution entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of its formation," was to them the firſt object, "and popularity and power," were but "different means of obtaining that object". So much for the deſcription of Mr. Burke's friends, and their prniciples, down to the end of the year 1782.

Can he contemplate without emotion and regret, his departure from thoſe principles, and his abandonment of thoſe men, who ſtill rally round the ſtandard of Freedom, and remain ſtaunch to the cauſe?——Can he look back on that eventful period, when the people followed him with bleſſings, and when the MAN OF THE PEOPLE was his friend, without anguiſh and remorſe?—Can he behold the diviſion and diſperſion of that PARTY to which he was pledged, and by which he was foſtered and fed in his political infancy, without feeling the curſe of ingratitude light upon him, and calling upon the mountains to cover his ſhame?—Can he in "that cheerleſs gloom, which darkens the evening of his life," find no conſolation to ſhed a faint twilight over it, in reflecting, that the friends with whom he "commenced his political career," and linked with whom, as with a Theban band, he had combated for freedom and overthrown venality, were ſtill leagued with him in a holy brotherhood, which age and mutual toil had ſanctified and made venerable?—No! the conſolations that aſſuage and mitigate the frowns of fortune and the chaſtiſements of fate, to other men, are rejected or unknown by him. Like a way-

ward child, he could throw aſide the paſſion that pleaſed, for the folly that flattered. The friend who differed was the friend who betrayed, and the tear which wounded affection ſhed, at the moment of ſeparation, was, with ſullen and implacable, with cold and unforgiving auſterity, ſuffered to flow as an effuſion of hypocriſy, unmingled with its kindred tear. Unfeeling *obduracy*, has been proverbially called, the vice only of the old, and that vice has met its puniſhment, in the viſitation of its rival paſſion. The heart that felt, and the eye that indicated that emotion of friendſhip and regret, are hallowed by me, and I revere Charles Fox as much as I deſpiſe all thoſe who could reject his proffered friendſhip. Manly, decided, open, generous, candid, and conſiſtent thro' life, his deviations have been thoſe of genius, and his errors the errors of humanity. He deprecated this deſtructive war—he foretold the conſequences that muſt inevitably reſult from our embarking in it.—He warned, adviſed, adjured—but all in vain. Like the propheteſs Caſſandra, he was unheeded, or deſpiſed, and the fulfilment of ſome of his predictions is yet finally to be accompliſhed.

On thoſe points Mr. Burke differed, and the fears of the Ariſtocracy, and the panic of the privileged orders prevailed againſt an eloquence, impreſſive and exalted, and againſt arguments concluſive and irrefragable. What was the reſult? The long meditated diſmemberment of oppoſition took place; Mr. Burke joined the ſeceders; the inſidious Machiavel ſmiled at the ſucceſs of his project; the Duke of Portland became the ready dupe of all his artifices, and Lord Fitzwilliam was degraded and diſmiſſed from the

government

government of Ireland, for the patronage of which he had conſented to give up his friends, his party, and his principles. What compenſation was Mr. Burke to get for the ſacrifice?—*Emancipation* for the Catholics in Ireland, to whom his ſon had been ſent on a miſſion, and for which he was paid largely, and a penſion for himſelf. The firſt article of this capitulation was promiſed, but never performed, and he ſurrendered his virtue *at diſcretion*, and parted with the "immediate jewel of his ſoul," to a betrayer, who laughed at his credulity, enjoyed his perſon and credit, and afterwards, like the inexorable Kirk, exhibited to him the ſuſpenſion of his favourite ſcheme, and the death of his darling project. The penſion, however, was granted, not ſo much as a reward for his tergiverſation, as a tie which would faſten and bind down his wavering and alarmed conſcience, and lead him to make ſome uſeful diſcoveries---for Edmund is ſordid as well as timid. He feared the introduction of Jacobin principles and a permanent guillotine, and he wiſhed to lay up ſome little ſtore againſt the ſeverity of a hard ſeaſon. But having ſurrendered one penſion * thro' pique, he ſhould now part with the other thro' principle.

This is the true ſecret of this dark tranſaction, and the hinge upon which the whole ſyſtem of his venality turns.—It is the conviction of the contemptible part he has been made to act in this comedy of errors, that has wounded him to the quick, and made him to cry out with ſuch vehe-

* He gave up a penſion of 300*l.* per ann. on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment, out of pride, and reſentment to Mr. Hamilton, with whom he had had a quarrel, and thro' whoſe intereſt he had obtained it.

mence

mence of agony. It is this phrenzy of compunction and deſpair, that has made his plea of juſtification a tiſſue of contradictions, a teſſelated ground-work, inlaid with moſaic, and exhibiting the moſt varied and repugnant aſſemblage of, figures and colours. It is this confuſion of ideas that has forced him to contradict himſelf in every page, and that had made him declare, ſo wide of the fact that "he never for a moment, in reality "nor in appearance, for any length of time, was "ſeparated from the good wiſhes and good opi-"nion" of thoſe "with whom he commenced "his political career."——Surely he does not think that the friends he forſook and betrayed eſteem him the more for his apoſtacy! But "there is no madman, in his maddeſt ideas, and "maddeſt projects, that may not count upon "numbers to ſupport his principles and execute "his deſigns."——

Mr. Burke has gone thro' a very general and diffuſive detail of his conduct, during the whole of what he calls "a portentous criſis," from 1780 to 1782, in which I am as incapable as diſinclined to follow him thro' all his "*contra indicants*;" in which he endeavours to point out and illuſtrate his ideas of reform, and the connection they had with thoſe "hideous changes "which have *ſince* barbarized France, and threat-"ened the moral and political order of the whole "world." From which it is obvious, that our ſeer muſt have had a preſcience *then* of what has *ſince* happened; and, by the aid of a SECOND SIGHT, viewed with affright and horror the "revolution harpies of France," riſing from chaos, and generating "all monſtrous and prodigious things." But tho' he then ſaw revealed thoſe viſionary ſpectres, he ſaw not what conjured them up.—He ſaw

not

not the treaty of Pilnitz ſuſpended over the republic of France, like a bloody and preſcriptive ſcroll.—He ſaw not the confederate powers of Europe conſpiring together, like a fell triumvirate, to deluge her fertile plains with ſlaughter.—He ſaw not the Britiſh Plutus, converting all he *touched* into gold, and grinding down the faces of the poor, to export millions.—He ſaw not the hidden and deſtructive machinery—the ſecret wheels and latent ſprings that were employed in the fabrication of aſſignats, nor the inteſtine and civil butchery that was ſtirred up and excited, to foment diſcord in that unhappy and harraſſed country, which ſo exaſperated it againſt all thoſe who had officiouſly intermeddled with its internal policy and government. Had he ſeen theſe things alſo, in his viſions, he would have viſited the crimes of the Marats and the Robeſpieres not upon France, but upon England; and diſcovered in his patron and protector the true ſower of ſedition; nor would he have compared the noble and ingenuous Duke of Bedford with the contemptible and profligate Duke of Orleans.

" *See what a grace was ſeated on this brow:*
" *Hyperion's curls—the front of Jove himſelf—*
" *An eye like Mars, to threaten and command.*"

This would have been the portrait of the noble deſcendant of the houſe of Ruſſel, that had preſented itſelf to him; and not the hideous reſemblance of the execrable Egalite, in contemplating which, I am " amazed at the morbid ſtrength, or the natural infirmity of the mind," that could unite ſuch diſſonants.

In the diſcuſſion of his plan of economy and reform, Mr. Burke has taken up twelve pages; but as I have already extracted the marrow from them in my obſervations on his penſion, I ſhall come

come at once to the next ſtrong hold in which he has entrenched himſelf.

Of himſelf he has ſpoken largely throughout, with much ſelf-approving complacency, and a degree of egotiſm very pardonable in a man who is ſo wrapped up in his own opinions—who is ſo

——" *Totus in ſe, teres atque rotundus.*"

And which, by the way, would come much better from ſome other leſs intereſted authority.

This brings me, my Lord, of courſe, to the concluding paragraph of page 23 of Mr. Burke's pamphlet, in which he becomes the aſſailant and makes a vigorous ſally againſt the Duke of Bedford. I admit with him, that " there will always " be ſome difference of opinion in the value of " political ſervices," nor will I deny, that ſuch ſervices ſhould not go unrewarded. Money is the great political pabulum, that cheriſhes and ſuſtains every human exertion, and without which human exertion would fail, and human abilities lie dormant. I do not depreciate thoſe ſervices upon which he bottoms his merits; my argument goes to his conſiſtency, and, with great deference, I think the Duke of Bedford had a *right* to complain of and queſtion ſo prodigal and laviſh a bounty, beſtowed upon an individual poſſeſſing no office of truſt under government, and who, though an old " invalided ſervant of the public," had ſufficient to maintain him, without being put in the liſt of penſioners, or driven to ſolicit an aſylum in Chelſea-hoſpital.—Mr. Burke takes much merit to himſelf in having " done all he could to diſ- " countenance the meretricious French faction in " their enquiries into the fortunes of thoſe, who " hold large portions of wealth, without any ap- " parent merit of their own" and has " ſtrained

every

" every nerve to keep the Duke of Bedford in " that ſituation, which alone makes him his ſu- " perior.——What are we to collect from this paſſage, but that Mr. Burke wiſhed to preſerve and keep entire, from modern innovation, that property which he conſiders, from its bulk and *inequality*, to that of the general fund, to be a radical defect in the conſtitution of the ſtate? I confeſs it ſtrikes me in that light, and appears obvious from the context of his obſervations on that head of his argument. And, as to the compariſon of reſpective merits, where *rank* makes, as he aſſerts, the *only* diſtinctions, I muſt differ with him in that point alſo.—I think the Conſtitution owes every thing to the Duke of Bedford's anceſtors. Mr. Burke thinks it owes them nothing. —I think his Grace's principles and the ſide he has taken in oppoſition to Mr. Burke's war, entitle him to that exalted rank which he holds in the empire he has thus endeavoured to preſerve, and to the gratitude of every true lover of his country, and I think that the virtues from which thoſe principles emanate, are " becoming " to all ſuch men in all ſuch times"—But the an- " tiquated moraliſts, at whoſe feet Mr. Burke was " brought up" (thoſe, I ſuppoſe, are the Jeſuits) " would not have thought theſe the fitteſt matters " to form the virtues of young men of rank," and his argument is that " what might have been " well enough, and might have been received " with a veneration mixed with awe and terror " from an old, ſevere, crabbed *Cato*, (like himſelf) " would have wanted ſomething of propriety in " the young Scipios, the ornament of the Roman " nobility, in the flower of their life."—This is ſtrange reaſoning—that the young patricians ſhould be excluded from all concern in the com-

mon-

mon-wealth, and crabbed old Catos ſtand up alone for liberty and retrenchment—ſo that, ſhould any of thoſe ſevere cenſors think proper, to prevent all enquiry into their own penſions, and remain ſilent, as to public robbery and peculation, the abuſes muſt go on—becauſe ſuch matters were not ſuited to be the "ornament of the young nobility"! But how does the compariſon ſtand between the modern and the ancient cenſor? —Cato loved liberty and Rome, and would have died for them; he would have followed their remains to the grave and expired upon their tombs.

——————————" *Non ante revellar*
" *Exanimem quam te amplectar Roma, tuumque*
" *Nomen Libertas, et inanem proſequar umbram.*

Mr. Burke would prevent even the diſcuſſion of all ſubjects that tended to expand and enlighten the mind, would ſhut up all ſchools that lectured upon liberty, and ſend ſuch of their profeſſors as ventured to diſcuſs the neceſſity of reform, to New South-Wales to ſtudy botany;——he would, according to the principles of "thoſe antiquated "moraliſts at whoſe feet he was brought up" "ſhut up all academies" that might tend to enlighten or inform the people. "The ignorance "of the people, ſays Helvetius, the mother of a "ſtupid devotion, is a poiſon that, ſublimated by "religious Chymiſts, (like Mr. Burke) ſpreads "round the throne the mortal exhalations of "ſuperſtition. The learning of the philoſophers, "on the contrary, is a pure and ſacred fire, that "drives far from kings the peſtilential vapours of "fanaticiſm"——Nor ſhould Mr. Burke ſet up as the only teacher. "Opinions and underſtand-"ing (ſays Milton in his addreſs to the parliament) "are not ſuch wares as to be monopolized

" and

" and traded by tickets and ſtatutes and ſtandards. " We muſt not think to make a ſtaple commodity " of all the knowledge of the land,—to mark and " licence it like our broad cloth and wool-packs. " To prevent men thinking and acting for them- " ſelves, by reſtraints, is like the exploits of that " man who thought to pound up the crows, by " ſhutting his park-gate;—and this obſtructive " violence, meets for the moſt part with an event " utterly oppoſite to the end it drives at; inſtead " of ſuppreſſing books" (or academies for *grown* gentlemen) " it raiſes and inveſts them with re- " putation. The puniſhment of wits enhances " their authority, (ſaith the Viſcount of St. Albans) " and a forbidden writing (or lecture) " is thought to be a certain ſpark of truth that " flies up in the face of them that ſeek to tread " it out." Had Mr. Burke's publications and ſpeeches been referred to a miniſterial licencer, the world had loſt conſiderable pleaſure as well as profit, and perhaps known leſs of the ſublime and beautiful. Is it for him, who has been a haranguer and pamphleteer from his infancy, to ſhut up " by virtue of a *Senatus conſultum*," all liberal enquiry, and, dictatorially, preſcribe bounds to free diſcuſſion? But " the awful ſtate of the " time and not himſelf or his own juſtification is " the true object in what he now writes, or ſhall " ever write or ſay." Why not adhere to his text then and not harraſs his readers with theſe tireſome and diſguſting repetitions?

" *Occidit miſeros crambe repetita magiſtros.*"——

Antiquated doctrines fit only for arbitrary manuſcript ages, and not ſuited to a liberal enlightened æra.

Becauſe the Duke of Bedford dared queſtion the prudence, or propriety, of granting a penſion exceſſive and beyond all moderate bounds, to a man who did not ſtand in need of ſo extraordinary a bounty, he is to be ſet up as a butt for him to level all his aſperity at, and empty his quiver of every deadly ſhaft that malice or vindictive rage had dipped in venom. Invective, at once inapplicable and illiberal, which he has contrived to ſpread over ſix or ſeven pages, to his own ſcandal and eternal diſgrace. "The grants to the "houſe of Ruſſel might have been enormous," but "Is it for *him* to queſtion the diſpenſation of "royal favour," or is the Duke of Bedford anſwerable for the conduct of his anceſtors?—Fie! Mr. Burke, indeed this *is* illiberal,—for—"It is "his *anceſtor*, the original penſioner, that has "laid up this inexhauſtible fund of merit which "makes his Grace ſo very delicate and exceptious "about the merit of all other grantees of the "crown." No—I am ſure Mr. Burke would admit, if his vehemence could for a moment permit him to think coolly, that the claſſical adage is equally applicable to both, and that no man ſhould ſtand charged for the crimes of thoſe anceſtors, whoſe merits have never been conſidered as heir-looms that deſcended to their immediate poſterity.

"*Nam genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipſi,*
"*Vix ea noſtra voco.*"———

By way of vindicating the royal bounty, ſo liberally beſtowed upon himſelf, he arraigns "thoſe "prodigies of profuſe donation" by which the remote and unoffending inheritor "tramples on "the mediocrity of humble and laborious indivi-"duals,"—and ridicules, in a ſtrain of the moſt

pointed

pointed irony, all the ſplendid mummery of the herald's college, and cries down the " hiſtorians, " recorders and blazoners of virtues and arms" which compoſe that fruitful fountain of honor, and fertile ſource of Ariſtocracy, in a manner that would not diſcredit the eloquence of the moſt equalizing democrat, that ever chaunted " ça irà" at the grand " auto de fe," at which thoſe bright inſignia of nobility were condemned to ſuffer ! !

And here, my Lord, let me paſs over the tireſome ~~comparifon~~ of Mr. Burke's comparative merits, with thoſe of the houſe of Ruſſel, as ſpeedily as poſſible; it is ſo illiberal and inconſiſtent, that I am ſure your Lordſhip cannot but turn away with diſguſt and contempt from it. Nor would I have taken up that part of the ſubject, in conformity to my declaration at the commencement of this literary conteſt, namely, that I meant not to take up the cudgels in behalf of the Duke of Bedford, or the Earl of Lauderdale ; the latter of whom, by the way, ſeems to have been totally forgotten, and is only dragged into the picture as his noble friend's *bottle-holder*, did not a few miſcellaneous obſervations occur, that tend to illuſtrate Mr. Burke's principles, and ſhew from whence aroſe the wrath of ſtern Pelides.

The crimes of his Grace's anceſtor, in conjunction with Henry VIII. (to whom, by the bye, we are indebted for what is, perhaps improperly, called—the REFORMATION,) was according to him, " in plundering a part of the national " church, of his time and country," and conferring the ſpoils of a ſet of lazy monks, and voluptuous eccleſiaſtics, upon men more active and more deſerving. This is the impious act of ſacrilege, that rouſed the indignation of our anchoret,

choret, made him to quit his cell and throw off the weeds of mourning and humility, to "de-"fend the whole of the national churches, of "all countries, from the principles and examples "which lead to eccleſiaſtical pillage, thence to a "contempt of *all* preſcriptive titles," &c. &c.—Well done, brave father Loyola!—Go on to defend, with all your might, the *whole* of the churches in the univerſe, againſt that by law eſtabliſhed.—Go on to defend "*all* preſcriptive titles," that you may ſhew the world how culpable the *poor* Duke of Bedford is, in having had anceſtors who bequeathed to him beeves and lands, and titles of preſcription, and virtues, perhaps as patriotic as thoſe of his calumniator.—Go on, to expiate the unfeeling and unmanly obſervation you caſt upon your Royal Maſter, when ſuffering under divine viſitation,—by the naſty ſlaver which, in your adulatory encomium, you have caſt upon his pa-"triotic amuſements," and his agrarian "hours of leiſure."

I cannot but pauſe one moment longer, over the catalogue of this man's "MERITS," to expreſs my aſtoniſhment at his claiming credit for acts, that ſhould oppreſs and weigh him down. "He has reſiſted the power and "pride of France, under any form of its rule, "and oppoſed it, with the greateſt zeal and ear-"neſtneſs, when that rule appeared in the worſt "form it could aſſume." Has he forgotten the American conteſt ſo ſoon? Did he then oppoſe with zeal and earneſtneſs the interference of the French monarchy, with our trans-atlantic brethren, and the attempt of his moſt Catholic Majeſty, to ſever her Colonies from Great-Britain, and thereby ruin a great portion of her commerce, and weaken and diſmember the empire at large? Is this the laudable conduct, from

which

which he claims ſuch exalted merit? By "ex-
"citing a ſpirit in the Houſe where he had the
"honor of a ſeat, for carrying on with early
"vigour and deciſion, *the moſt clearly juſt and*
"*neceſſary war*, that this or any nation ever car-
"ried on," he alſo claims for himſelf peculiar merit.——Good God! is not this adding inſult to injury and contumely to oppreſſion?---Oppreſſion of the worſt ſort---the oppreſſion of the unoffending people of England, thro' the agency of the moſt unjuſtifiable cruſade,—to maintain and uphold which, (to uſe the language of an ingenious friend) he echoes the words of a malignant Miniſter, and pleads guilty to the charge of promoting the moſt unjuſt—ungenerous—unproſperous—impolitic and cruel conteſt, that ever called down ruin on an empire, or intailed miſery and want upon a once proſperous and flouriſhing nation. If this be the merit upon which he reſts his claim to public gratitude and private bounty, he will find very few who will conteſt with him the excluſive privilege of ſo ſingular a pre-eminence. Indeed, indeed, I fear "that too much learning hath made him mad."

From this ſharp invective of the Duke of Bedford, in which Mr. Burke had almoſt exhauſted the little breath and patience he had left; from this high tone in *fortè*, he has fallen into a modulated ſtrain of ſoft *pianò*, and ſtarts extatic to a more melancholy movement. He expatiates upon the merits of his deceaſed ſon, in a ſtrain of tragic pathos, whom he deſcribes as a "finiſhed man," and blubbers forth his eulogy with more than "querulous weakneſs." He was the incomparable Creichton of the age he lived in; and "in all the points in which perſonal merit can "be viewed, in ſcience, in erudition, in genius,

"in

" in taſte, in honor, in generoſity, in humanity, " in every liberal ſentiment, and every liberal " accompliſhment, would not have ſhewn him- " ſelf inferior to the Duke of Bedford." I believe there was no rival conteſt between them, and wonder how Mr. Burke could drag, from his peaceful ſepulchre, the corſe of his dead ſon, to exhibit him before the tribunal of the public.

If an attack has been made, and that he has any more ſplendid and extraordinary *merits* to plead, why not plead them? Or does he imagine, that by making an affecting appeal to the paſſions of mankind, or rather womankind, he ſhall be able to prejudice their judgments? Or, by removing the pall which concealed ſo many fair proportions, " move the ſtones to riſe and mutiny" againſt the cruel and relentleſs Duke of Bedford?—Far be it from me to condemn the effuſions of parental partiality, tho' expreſſed in the moſt exaggerated and glowing hyperbole, or, faſtidiouſly, depreciate the pathetic funeral oration, a fond father has pronounced over his dead child. It certainly reſcues him, in ſome degree, from the charge of *indiſcriminate* obduracy, it ſhews that he has domeſtic virtues, and that domeſtic loſſes can call forth the moſt pungent of his feelings, and raiſe his afflictions to the moſt exalted ſublimity of ſorrow. But what has the public to do with his private griefs, and why draw aſide the ſacred veil, with which domeſtic calamity ſhould ever be ſhrouded from the prophane inſpection of the vulgar, whoſe eye has no ſympathiſing tear to ſhed over them?

Had he reflected how many fathers have loſt their ſons, and how many mothers have wept over their firſt-born, during the progreſs of this deſtructive war, of which he is ſo prompt to acknowledge himſelf the author,

he

he would have ſilenced thoſe piercing and heart-rending wailings, that muſt collect about him ſuch an aſſemblage of fellow-ſufferers, as ſhould drown him with their griefs, and ſilence him with their reproaches. I am apt to ſuſpect, my Lord, the ſincerity of ſuch loud and importunate lamentations, and have always conſidered them, as a vain oſtentation of tenderneſs and ſenſibility, put on to attract female ſympathy and condolence, and intereſt the weaker ſex to ſtand forth as warm champions in the cauſe of the *tender-hearted ſufferer!* With me, the ſigh ſuppreſſed and hectic emotion are ſtronger indicatives of agonized affliction.——I own,—I do not like thoſe ſobbers.

This violent paroxyſm having ſubſided, for all violent emotions ſoon ſubſide, and, having wiped away the witneſſes of his weakneſs and ſmoothed his ruffled brow, Mr. Burke again turns to the Duke of Bedford. The rules of preſcription and immemorial poſſeſſion are again defended and again confuted, by this ſage Juſtinian, and the "whole revolutionary ſyſtem, inſtitutes, digeſt, "code, novels, text, gloſs, comment, &c." of France, are anathematized in a new form of prayer compoſed by himſelf and pronounced from the "ſanctuary" or "holy of holies" which he had erected on "the brow of "the Britiſh Sion;"—and concluding with an "Amen! ſo be it."

If this be not abſolutely profane, it is ridiculous.—His head is ſo ſtuffed with miſcellaneous matter, and his fancy ſo inflamed with ſacred and prophane hiſtory, that, ſcience and mechanics having failed to ſupply him with metaphors, the "dunghill and the ſhambles" are ranſacked and rooted for filth and "offal" with which

to

to pelt and beſpatter the Duke of Bedford and the Rights of Man.

" If the rude inroad of Gallick tumult" ſhall " be introduced into our city by a miſguided po- " pulace," ſays Mr. Burke, in his prophetic furor, —" we ſhall all of us periſh and be overwhelmed " in a common ruin."—" If a great ſtorm blow " on our coaſt, it will caſt the whales on the " ſtrand as well as the perriwinkles," &c. &c. —*If* the ſky falls we ſhall catch larks—*If* Mr. Burke will permit me to put in my *if* alſo—Thoſe *Iffs* are the moſt commodious inſtruments with which modern jugglers perform all their ſlight of hand tricks, and if all theſe dreadful calamities ſhould come to paſs, the Duke of Bedford's title deeds, as well as Mr. Burke's,—" will be burnt in " the courts of Bedford (Equality) houſe."

Is he " to blame, for thoſe hoſtile" predictions? —For his inſidious attempts and wicked inſinuations, he is.—He would holla the miniſterial blood-hounds, if he could, againſt ſuch conſtructive traitors to his opinions as the Duke of Bedford and, like a true alarmiſt, affright women and children with the tune of ça ira, as they were ſcared of old with " Malbruc and Raw-head and bloody bones:" for " they are the Duke of Bedford's natural hunters, and he is (as all ſuch men as he are) their natural game."

" The men of property in France, he tells us, " confiding in a force, which ſeemed to be irreſiſt- " ible, becauſe it had never been tried, neglected " to prepare for a conflict with their enemies at " their own weapons." and were therefore " found in ſuch a ſituation as the Mexicans were, " &c. &c." for, according to him, thoſe " unfortu- " nate noblemen and gentlemen" who " ſuffer- " ed by the " cannibal philoſophy of France"

did

did not dream that "the fabrick of the French mo-
"narchy under which they flouriſhed, would be
"ſubverted," in the manner, and by the perſons whom he deſcribes, and were therefore, "daſhed
"in pieces in the ſtorm, and our ſhores are
"covered with the wrecks."—Let us conſider how theſe obſervations hang together—Had the men of rank and property in France rallied round the throne, it might have yet ſtood ſecure: their properties, had they remained at home to protect them, had never been confiſcated.—It was their panic that brought down on them the vengeance of republicaniſm; it was by emigration they forfeited their eſtates. From the nature of things, France could not long have ſtood as an arbitrary government; her nobility were too rich and her peaſantry too poor. Her clergy were too numerous and oppreſſive, and the throne, which ſhould have been exalted in the hearts of the people, was reared on the heads of the hierarchy.—The people were ground down by arbitrary exactions; the nobles had their fiefs, and the monks their monaſteries;—the gibbet ſtood on every privileged eſtate, to awe and to execute; and the game laws ſent many a father of a family to the gallies. The court was luxurious and extravagant, and ſupplies were to be provided for both. Miniſters were found fruitful in projects, and Neckar and Callone, by turns, abuſed the royal ear.—Immenſe loans followed immenſe taxes, and the hour of reckoning and account was put off to the laſt poſſible moment.—Patience began to be exhauſted as well as wealth, and the maſſy pillars that ſupported the national credit, undermined by avaricious and ſcheming financiers, tottered and fell in hideous "ruin and combuſtion" not only on the

heads of the offending ſervants but on that of the unoffending maſter of that great family.

Such was the ſtate of France, when Great Britain interfered with her internal policy, and an ambitious and impolitic miniſter, by his faſtidious and haughty rejection of all terms of accommodation or treaty, plunged England into a deſtructive and ruinous war, and covered her ſhores with "the "wrecks of the French nobility." Let me tell Mr. Burke that it was not "an handful of bearded "men" that overturned the monarchy of France, but the confederated ſtrength of TWENTY-FOUR MILLIONS OF MEN, oppreſſed and groaning under deſpotiſm. Let me tell him, that what has happened could not but have happened as the neneſſary reſult of moral as well as phyſical cauſes. "When a government (ſays Helvetius) becomes "cruel to exceſs, its troubles are ſalutary. They "are the pangs a medicine gives the patient it "heals. To free a people from ſervitude, ſome-"times fewer men are ſacrificed, than periſh at a "public rejoicing badly conducted.—The evil of "inſurrection is in the *cauſe* that produces it: the "pain of a criſis is in the diſorder that excites "it.—When men fall under deſpotiſm, they muſt "make efforts to ſhake it off, and thoſe efforts "are, at that period, the only property the un-"fortunate people have left. The height of "miſery is, not to be able to free ourſelves from "it, and to ſuffer without daring to complain." I have taken the liberty of tranſcribing this paſſage for the edification of Mr. Burke, ſhould this letter ever fall under his peruſal, to ſhew him there is a chain of cauſes exiſting in the moral as well as political world, that may lead to ſuch events, and that the firſt link of that maſſy chain is rivetted to deſpotiſm.

It

It was an effort to throw off a tyranny that galled the people which convulsed that great empire, and subverted the "grand fabric of the French "monarchy." But it was the flight of the nobles and the interference of Great Britain that led to the confiscations and massacres we have all witnessed with pity and with horror. Yes! the tyranny of Robespiere had its abetters in England, and the massacres which his ruthless reign gave birth to, were hatched and engendered there.—Let Mr. Burke, therefore, suspend his oracular predictions, nor build an hypothesis on visionary speculations. God forbid, that any thing similar should occur in our times, or our countries. God forbid, that the evils which exist in our days, and the abuses that result from a mal-administration should lie too deep, or grow too morbid to be eradicated. For though the people of England have always been fond of fighting, and the temple of Janus has seldom been shut for any length of time, I sincerely hope that, having sufficiently smarted from the wounds inflicted on their trade and commerce during the present war, they will be anxious to resume the garb of peace, nor suffer the reproach which was cast on the Romans, to fall upon them;

"*Non erat is populus, quem pax tranquilla juvaret,*
"*Quem sua libertas immotis pasceret armis.*

I sincerely pray, that they may not be driven and exasperated, by ministerial obstinacy, to tear in pieces and trample on that venerable constitution, heretofore so valued and respected. I do not think that, with all his chymical skill, Mr. Burke could convert a British subject into a French cannibal; and tho' the "heart of a thoroughbred metaphysician may be hard," I can tell him what

what is much harder——the heart of a *thorough-trained Jeſuit*——that " cruel unfeeling temper, " which has diſtinguiſhed the monks of every " age and country;—that ſtern indifference which " is ſo ſeldom mollified by perſonal friendſhip, " and is inflamed by religious hatred, and that " mercileſs zeal which has ſtrenuouſly admini- " ſtered the holy office of inquiſitor." * It is philoſophers of this claſs, and not the metaphyſicians he alludes to, " who conſider *men* in " their experiments, no more than they do mice " in an air-pump, or in a recipient of mephe- " tic gas."—It is "philoſophy alone, (and perhaps " it is no more than the boaſt of philoſophy) " that her gentle hand is able to eradicate from " the human mind, the latent and deadly princi- " ple of fanaticiſm." † The boaſt of that enlightened philoſophy which is ſpreading over all Europe, to the downfall of ſophiſm and bigotry.

The Abbè Sieyes has come in for his ſhare of the Abbè Burke's virulent invective; his " neſts of pigeon-holes" are ranſacked and rummaged of their eggs, and the whole embryo collection of ſyſtems which they contained, broken and thrown ſportively, about by him, in his fanciful frolics.—He admits the experiment to be a novelty, yet ridicules, with the moſt inconſiſtent irony, the philoſophers of France, for ſubmitting their variety of ſortments for ſelection. Certainly he is " *mauvais plaiſant*," and laughs at the Gallic architects who have drawn the plan, and raiſed the ſuperſtructure of a conſtitution, in the elevation of which he was not conſulted or employed as a ground projector. However, it is but fair that we ſhould wait a little longer, to ſee whether it

* Gibbon. † Ib.

will

will ſtand the preſent rough ſeaſon, before we condemn it altogether; nor ſhould we pull it down, in order to convert its " ruins" into gunpowder, till we ſee whether that gunpowder ſhould be wanting.——

" Is the genius of philoſophy not yet known?" aſks Mr. Burke, inſultingly.——Yes, it is both known and acknowledged: that divine ſpark which the genius of Bacon ſent forth, which was communicated to Boyle, Locke and Newton, which Des Cartes, Malbranche, Rouſſeau, Voltaire, Condorcet and Barthelemy, felt and followed; that ſpark, which was hidden and almoſt extinguiſhed during the dark ages of ſuperſtition and monaſtic myſtery, has ariſen, in the eighteenth century, to re-animate and re-illumine mankind, and diſpel the vapours of fanaticiſm, which had ſpread from the cauldron of prieſtcraft over the whole Chriſtian world. From that " hell-broth," has he extracted all thoſe " rumps and ſirloins and briſkets," and " all ſorts of pieces for roaſting, boiling and ſtewing," of which he has made ſo execrable an *olio*—a diſguſting farrago of vulgar metaphors and coarſe alluſions, better ſuited to the purlieus of Clare-market, than to the circles of polite or philoſophic readers.

" Their only queſtion," (meaning the *Sans-culotte* philoſophers, as he is pleaſed to call them) " will be, that of their *Legendre*, or ſome other of their legiſlative butchers."—How he *cuts-up!*—How he *tallows* in the *cawl* or on the *kidneys!* &c. &c.

You are diſguſted, my Lord.—Let me call your attention to ſome other matter, and turn from " thoſe ſharp incommodities, which beſet old age," to the portrait of Lord Keppel, which preſented itſelf immediately to the imagination of this " Philoſopher of the Shambles," upon giving the

the "*Coup-de-grace*" to the mangled carcaſe of the Duke of Bedford.

Well, Sir, and what ſay you of Lord Keppel? Why, that he "was one of the greateſt and beſt men of his age," ſays Mr. Burke, and that "my "ſon, in the early fluſh and enthuſiaſm of his "virtue, and the pious paſſion with which he "attached himſelf to all my connections," aided "me in *ſquandering* ourſelves in courting every "kind of enmity for his ſake."——This is truly the "feeble garrulity of age, which loves to diffuſe itſelf into diſcourſe of the departed great." But what it can have to ſay to the attacks made on Mr. Burke and his penſion, I am puzzled to find out, except that, not having any living authorities to produce, in confirmation and ſupport of his doctrines, he is driven to conjecture what his deceaſed friend would have thought upon the occaſion, and how he would have reprimanded his nephew the Duke of Bedford; and he concludes, that he would have taken a decided part with him in this "awful criſis," not only from "his goodneſs of heart, his reaſon, his taſte, his public duty and his principles," but alſo from—his *prejudices!!*—'Tis thus Mr. Burke would meet his enemies at the gate, and combat the "horrid medley of madneſs, vice, impiety and "crime," with the arms of *prejudice*. And here, my Lord, he takes an opportunity of tracing the genealogy of Lord Keppel, and, by an anticlimax, tells us that "his family was noble, and it was Dutch;"——

> "*And thou, Dalhouſy, the great God of war,*
> "*Lieutenant-general to the Earl of Mar.*"

In order to let his readers know, that his Batavian friend was of opinion, "that no great com-

"monwealth

" monwealth could, by any poſſibility, long ſub-
" ſiſt, without a body of ſome kind or other of
" nobility, decorated by honor, and fortified by
" privilege."——But how Lord Keppel came to entertain that ſentiment, ſo repugnant to truth, experience, and the cuſtom and uſage of his native country, we are left to unravel as we may. But, certainly, the Commonwealth of Holland has ſubſiſted for a long time without a body of nobility; the Republic of Geneva has exiſted without a body of nobility; the Commonwealth of America has ſubſiſted without a body of nobility; and Lord Keppel, had he lived, would have ſeen the Commonwealth of France exiſt without a body of nobility!! But Mr. Burke has grown wonderfully fond of privileges of late, and, perhaps, he thinks a peerage would be no bad ornament to a penſion. However, tho' he has drawn a picture of his friend, abounding with prejudices, he has accounted fully for ſome of the cauſes which produced the ſubverſion of the French monarchy, " in the deſperate attainder
" paſſed on all their poſterity by the Orleans,
" and the Rochefoucaults, and the Fayettes, and
" the Viſcounts de Noalles, and the falſe Peri-
" gords, and the long *et cetera* of the perfidious
" Sans Culottes of the Court, who, like demoni-
" acs, poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of fallen pride and
" inverted ambition, abdicated their dignities,
" diſowned their families, betrayed the moſt ſa-
" cred of all truſts, and, by breaking in pieces a
" great link in ſociety and all the cramps and
" holdings of the ſtate, brought (as he would
" have it) eternal confuſion and deſolation on
" their country;" and he concludes this fiery Philippic, with a ſentiment of *benevolence* worthy of him,—that, " for the fate of the miſcreant parri-

" cides

" cides themſelves, he would have had no pity." —What! no pity for the unfortunate La Fayette, the friend of Waſhington and the friend of freedom; the man who aſſiſted in rendering America independent, and who loſt his liberty, and nearly his life, to preſerve that of his Sovereign! —What! no pity for thoſe heroic characters, who abdicated their titles and eſtates, and rendered themſelves worthy to be called MEN! Would Mr. Burke immolate them all on the altar of his *prejudices?* Would he confound them with Marat, Legendre, and Robeſpiere, as he has with Orleans? Is he not ſatisfied with abuſing, in a ſtrain of the moſt virulent invective, the Duke of Bedford, without overwhelming the *ci-devant* nobility of France with the foulеſt epithets?—He reminds me, my Lord, of the orator Caſſius Severus, whom, as we are told by Tacitus, Auguſtus could not cure of giving foul language by a ſeven years baniſhment into Crete, and whom he was at laſt obliged to tranſport into the rocky Seraphos, where, no doubt, age confirmed and aggravated the diſeaſe.—*In Saxo Seraphio conſenuit.*"—So incurable, with ſome, is the malady of ſcurrility.

I fear I have tired your patience, my Lord, in purſuit of a ſubject ſo diverſified and miſcellaneous, as to render an analytical review of it next to chimerical, and which, like the imagination of its author, ſpurns all order and contemns all rule; where paradox riſes above paradox, till they form a monument of human inconſiſtency. —Of ſuch materials is compoſed his epiſode on Lord Keppel, where he repreſents him, " Look-" ing to his Batavian deſcent," and exclaims,

" how

" how could he bear to behold his kindred, the " deſcendants of the brave *nobility* of Hol- " land, whoſe blood, prodigally poured out, had " protected their *independence*;—to behold them " bowed, in the baſeſt *ſervitude*, to the baſeſt and " the vileſt of the human race; in ſervitude to " thoſe who in no reſpect were ſuperior in dig- " nity, or could aſpire to a better place, than " that of hangmen to the *tyrants*, to whoſe *ſcep-* " *tered pride* they had oppoſed an elevation of " ſoul, that ſurmounted, and overpowered the " loftineſs of Caſtile, the haughtineſs of Auſtria, " and the over-bearing arrogance of France?" This is all pretty well for Mr. Burke, highly characteriſtical of his love of *independence*, his diſlike to *ſervitude*, and his abhorrence of " *tyrants*" and their " *ſceptered pride*." He forgets, perhaps, that it was the ſame indignant ſpirit that rouſed the people of France to reſiſt aggreſſion; and a ſimilar " elevation of ſoul," that prompted her nobility to ſurrender diſtinctions, that ſtood in the way of ſo great and extraordinary a revolution. If this be not blowing hot and cold with the ſame breath, I have neither feeling nor diſcrimination.

Adieu! my Lord,—let me quit this field of controverſy, to apologize for the liberty I have taken in monopolizing ſo much of your time and attention, and intruding my thoughts upon that lettered leiſure, which has ſo often contributed to the ſatisfaction and improvement of men of taſte and ſcience, who have not thought you undeſerving to preſide over and direct their councils.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

BOLINGBROKE.

Dublin, March 14th, 1796.